



NEXGEN
BUILDERS

NEXGEN BUILDERS MENTORING PARTNERSHIP

Empowering Black Youth for
Success in Skilled Trades



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Cumulatively, these public infrastructure and private development projects total over \$65 billion dollars in project value, contributing to local jobs and community benefits in communities across Toronto.



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Mentorship Program

The NexGen Builders Mentorship Program connects aspiring professionals with experienced industry leaders, offering guidance and hands-on experience to build successful careers in construction.

BECOME A MENTOR - BE MENTORED
nexgenbuilders.ca



Sign up to the **Employer Portal** today! Post your jobs for work-ready candidates. Offset costs with financial incentives for training and onboarding. Fulfill CBAs with pre-screened skilled workers.

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The NexGen Builders Mentoring Partnership is a community-driven initiative co-created with Toronto Community Benefits Network's (TCBN), community, labour and industry partners to address the systemic barriers that Black youth face in accessing opportunities in Canada's skilled trades sector. Led by TCBN, this program supports Black youth ages 16–34 by offering structured mentorship, career readiness training, and culturally relevant support to foster sustainable, long-term employment in the construction industry. It is grounded in the values of community benefits, equity, and

economic inclusion.

Despite the growing opportunities in the Greater Toronto Area's construction sector, Black youth remain underrepresented due to systemic challenges such as limited access, institutional bias, and lack of professional mentorship. NexGen Builders directly responds to these inequities by pairing participants with industry professionals, offering essential pre-apprenticeship training, and supporting mentees through every stage of their employment journey.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Through NexGen Builders, TCBN has formed key partnerships to enhance support. 211 Find Help offers 24/7 multilingual referrals for vital services. Medex Medical provides inclusive healthcare, including physiotherapy and mental wellness. Divigo™ promotes psychologically safe workplaces by equipping leaders with equity and inclusion tools, fostering environments where individuals feel respected, valued, and empowered to thrive.



PROGRAM GOALS AND PARTICIPANT BENEFITS

Participants in the NexGen Builders Mentoring Partnership can expect to gain:

- 01** A one-on-one match with an experienced mentor upon completing training
- 02** Readiness for employment and tools for long-term job retention
- 03** Access to unionized job opportunities, especially those created through Community Benefits Agreements
- 04** Registration into a Red Seal apprenticeship (depending on the trade) and support to advance in the apprenticeship pathway

EXPECTED PROGRAM OUTCOMES (COHORT-LEVEL IMPACT)

For each cohort of 12 participants, the program anticipates the following measurable outcomes:

- 01** Sustained employment or entry into an apprenticeship within 3–6 months
- 02** Increased self-confidence, job readiness, and workplace communication skills
- 03** Expanded peer and mentor networks to enhance social capital
- 04** Completion of mandatory safety certifications and trade-specific orientation
- 05** Development of emerging community leaders who return as future mentors

SELECTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The program unfolds in four phases:

Phase 1: Screening and Selection (2 Weeks)

Applicants begin by completing an expression of interest form, attending an orientation session, and creating an online profile that includes a short bio, resume, and professional photo. Employers and unions play an active role in the recruitment and selection process by identifying suitable candidates within their organizations, promoting the program to their members or staff, and providing input during the matching of mentors and mentees to ensure alignment with professional goals and industry needs.

Phase 2: Participation and Completion (45 Hours Self-Paced Over 3 to 6 Months)

Mentees attend weekly training sessions (online and in-person), check in with their Peer Mentor, and may engage in additional activities such as BuildForce Canada courses or safety certification. To successfully complete the program, participants must attend at least 75% of training sessions, after which they become eligible for reimbursement of up to \$250 for eligible expenses such as internet access or childcare and are matched with a long-term mentor.

Training Topics – Mentees to 6 Months)

Participants engage in up to 16 sessions covering topics such as:

- Empowerment & Racism Resiliency
- Women in Trades
- Indigenous Awareness
- Communication & Conflict Resolution
- Career Navigation and Green Construction
- Apprenticeship Pathways
- Workplace Culture, Rights, and Financial Literacy
- Additional modules may include Workplace Safety, WHMIS, PPE, and Hand Tool Awareness.



My experience as a mentee with NexGen Builders expanded my growth in ways school never could. It's the kind of learning you only get by doing the work, observing mentors, and embracing every opportunity to lead, teach, and uplift others." — Amadou Ceesay



Training Topics – Peer Mentors, Mentors & Master Mentors

- Motivational Interviewing
- Growth Mindset
- OARS Communication Skills

Phase 3: Mentor Matching & Professional Development

Upon training completion, mentees are matched with experienced mentors from the construction sector based on interests and trade goals. Mentees and mentors are given access and receive orientation to the My5 Mentoring App for tracking goals, logging sessions, and engaging with peers. Mentees meet monthly with the mentors and receive monthly check-ins with a dedicated mentoring coach. They also participate in quarterly group mentoring and networking sessions, an annual alumni retreat, and recognition through the Building Diversity Awards.

Phase 4: Targeted Referrals to Employment and Social Services (Concurrent)

Mentees are referred to tailored supports within our network including pre-apprenticeship programs (e.g., Quick Start in Construction), employment coaching and job-readiness workshops. They receive assistance with resume and interview preparation, union orientations and job placements. Community partners help build technical and soft skills essential for success.



Nominations are now open

Award recipients will be recognized for one or more steps they are taking that correspond to the Global Diversity.

buildingdiversity.ca/nominate



Toronto Community Benefits Network

Community Benefits
create positive change
by promoting local and
diverse hiring, social
procurement, and
community investments
that drive
sustainable growth.
Together, we build
stronger, more
inclusive neighborhoods.

A beacon for communities
communitybenefits.ca